

Remarks

Applicant has carefully considered the Office Action mailed on October 10, 2003. Claims 1-20 are pending in the present patent application. The Examiner rejected claims 1-20. In response to the Office Action, Applicant amended Figs. 1-2 as the Examiner requested. In addition, Applicant amended the specification to remove the informality noted by the Examiner as well as some other informalities that Applicant noted. No new matter has been added. Applicant requests further examination and reconsideration of the present patent application.

The Examiner rejected claims 1-20 under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Tom (US Patent Number 5,832,465) in view of Golibersuch et al.

Independent claims 1, 12, 17 and 20 in the present patent application each contain the limitation that some of the evidential values comprise unknown information.

The Examiner noted that Tom fails to teach the use of some evidential values that comprise unknown information, but submitted that Golibersuch et al. (hereinafter Golibersuch) does teach such limitation on page 56 in column 1. The Examiner then stated that it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to use unknown attributes or evidential value as taught in Golibersuch in the system and method described by Tom.

Applicant submits that the combination of Tom in view of Golibersuch fails to disclose or suggest using some evidential values that comprise unknown information. Applicant carefully reviewed the section (page 56 in column 1) in Golibersuch that the Examiner referenced as teaching the use of some evidential values that comprise unknown information, but believes that there is no such teaching. On page 56, in column 1, after the description of the steps involved in developing knowledge, Golibersuch notes that one of the advantages with his approach is that it identifies potential problems before proceeding into production. In particular, Golibersuch states that the steps involved in developing the knowledge will identify inadequacies such as inappropriate hierarchy, missing or unnecessary attributes and values, inconsistent examples and opinions, conflicts with policy, and inappropriate recommendations. This section does not mean that Golibersuch is using some evidential values that comprise

unknown information. Instead of using unknown information, Golibersuch tries to find more examples that resolve any identified inadequacies. Golibersuch then repeats its multi-step process until a consistent knowledge base is built. Golibersuch is only interested in using evidential values with known information and provides no motivation suggesting the desirability of using some evidential values that comprise unknown information.

Since the combination of Tom in view of Golibersuch fails to disclose or suggest using some evidential values that comprise unknown information, Applicant submits that the Examiner has not established a prima facie case of obviousness. In view of this distinction, Applicant submits that independent claims 1, 12, 17 and 20 are patentably distinguishable over the combination of Tom in view of Golibersuch. Claims 2-11, 13-16 and 18-19 depend directly or indirectly from now presumably allowable claims 1, 12 and 17, respectively, and are in allowable condition by dependency. Accordingly, Applicant requests that the Examiner reconsider and remove the §103(a) rejection of claims 1-20 under the combination of Tom in view of Golibersuch.

In view of the foregoing remarks and amendments, Applicant requests that the Examiner reconsider this application and allow claims 1-20.

If the Examiner has any questions regarding the present patent application, the Examiner can call Applicant's attorney, David Goldman, at telephone number (518)-387-5927 or (518)-387-5903.

Respectfully submitted,



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